

CASON
MA S1
-71W16

PROGRESS REPORT-MARCH 1971

(4)

**WASAGA PARK
COMMUNITY PROJECT**

CAZON
MASI
71W16

DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

801 BAY STREET • TORONTO 5, ONTARIO • 365-1527



ONTARIO

Office of the Deputy Minister

March 1971

The attached progress report of the Wasaga Park-Community contains a summary of past events, an evaluation of the current situation and a suggested plan for the future.


It is submitted for study and comment by all concerned so that, with any necessary changes, it can be accepted as a basis for further more detailed stages.

The development of this area for the benefit of those who come to stay, now and in the future, offers a special challenge. Not only must the unique natural facilities be used wisely, but a considerable degree of cooperation is necessary to achieve the successful outcome of each stage of development.

This report was prepared by David Tuckett of the Wasaga Park-Community Project of this Department who has already received a great deal of cooperation and assistance from the concerned municipalities and provincial agencies.

W. H. Palmer

W. H. Palmer,
Deputy Minister



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2022 with funding from
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/31761115474512>

CALON
MASI
-71W16

WASAGA PARK COMMUNITY PROJECT

PROGRESS REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

Minister

Hon. Dalton Bales, Q.C.

Deputy Minister

W. H. Palmer

COMMUNITY PLANNING BRANCH

Director

D. F. Taylor

801 Bay Street

Toronto 5, Ontario

March 1971



CONTENTS

| <u>BACKGROUND</u> | <u>Page</u> |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Summary of Events, 1962-1969 | 1 |
| <u>Map</u> - Master Plan 1967 | follows 4 |
| 2. The Project and its Objectives | 5 |
| 3. Work of the Project to the Present Time | 11 |
| <u>Map</u> - Built-Up Areas and Sub-Divided Lands, 1970, | follows 13 |
| 4. General Observations | 14 |
| <u>MASTER PLAN 1971</u> | |
| 5. Scope of the Master Plan 1971 | 26 |
| 6. The Ultimate Plan | 27 |
| 7. The Plan for the Mid-1980's | 29 |
| (1) General | 29 |
| (2) Park Areas | 30 |
| (3) Commercial Areas | 33 |
| (4) Tourist Accomodation | 34 |
| (5) Residential | 34 |
| (6) Water Supply, Drainage and Sewage Disposal | 37 |
| (7) Main Highways | 38 |
| <u>Map</u> - Master Plan 1971 | |
| Development by the Mid - 1980's | follows 39 |
| 8. Priorities for the Mid-1970's | 40 |
| <u>IMPLEMENTATION</u> | |
| 9. Priorities for 1971 | 41 |
| 10. Financial and Administrative Implications | 43 |

BACKGROUND

1. SUMMARY OF EVENTS, 1962-1969

Wasaga Beach has a fine sandy beach fronting Nottawasaga Bay; the beach has a slight gradient and the shallow water is very suitable for various water activities. At the back of the beach on wooded, slightly higher ground, all the land is subdivided and developed.

Wasaga Beach has grown in popularity as a tourist resort steadily over the last 60 years, first with the growth of cottage subdivisions, and more recently with the appearance of tourist accommodations adjoining the beach, and as a resort for day visitors mainly from the Toronto area. The four concerned municipalities endeavoured to maintain the beach for visitors but in 1960-1962 three of them (the Village of Wasaga Beach and the Townships of Sunnidale and Nottawasaga), finding this beyond their physical and financial resources, requested assistance from the Provincial Government and relinquished their licences of occupation. The beach in the Township of Flos was not subject to this arrangement.

Parks Plan 1963

The Department of Lands and Forests took over the responsibility for the beach, and produced a Parks Plan 1963 which proposed the purchase of most of the land within 400 feet of the

beach to provide picnic facilities and some 11,000 car parking spaces, mainly for day visitors. Currently about one quarter of this land has been purchased and, as sufficient land has been assembled in one area, beach improvements including picnic areas, washrooms and change houses have been added.

Interim Report 1965

The Department of Lands and Forests commissioned a firm of planning consultants, Project Planning Associates Ltd., to appraise the 1963 Plan. In a preliminary report they observed that the narrow extent of the beach park posed problems for the community and failed to exploit all the local recreational potential for the growing needs of the Province. Accordingly, they recommended the development of the beach as part of the development of a greater recreation area, designed to serve seasonal, weekend and day users.

The same consultants were re-hired and, under an interdepartmental study committee drawn from the Departments of Lands and Forests, Municipal Affairs, Highways, and Tourism and Information, a Master Plan was evolved for the development of the area in accordance with those recommendations.

Master Plan 1967

The Wasaga Beach Provincial Park Master Plan (hereafter referred to as the 1967 Plan) was submitted through the Minister of Lands and

Forests to the Cabinet and the Ontario Parks Integration Board in late 1967 after about two years work by the consultants and the Wasaga Beach Interdepartmental Study Committee.

The plan provided for the creation of a "large multi-use park supported by a complement of tourist facilities, completely integrated with a new viable community". The complete development of the whole park would enable it to handle some 85,000 visitors at one time, about half of them on the beach. The recreational concept was seen as providing for a wide range of recreational activities for day visitors, longer-term visitors and seasonal and permanent residents. The Plan identified five areas with prime public recreational resources - beach, river, river oxbow area, dunes and river flood plain. It proposed these areas for public use, laid out so that visitors could move easily from one part to another and participate in more than one activity during a visit.

In addition, the Plan proposed both commercial recreation facilities, including accommodation for about 15,000 visitors in several concentrated areas, and dwellings, seasonal and permanent, grouped into neighbourhoods for some 25,000 residents. The various commercial and residential areas were to be set within the surrounding park area.

To implement the Plan, a Provincial Commission was proposed to exercise both municipal and

owner/developer functions so that virtually all land and buildings in the area would be purchased prior to development or redevelopment. The proposed staging commenced with a freeze on further development and a progressive acquisition program from the front (beach) to the rear (dunes and river plain), developing the park areas in that order. The estimated purchase and development cost of the park was high- approximately \$30 million- as the beach/river area was already developed with buildings, and extensive areas of land were required at the rear.

The scope of the 1967 Plan was not acceptable to either Provincial or local interests because of: (1) the proposed replacement of the local municipal administration by the proposed Commission, (2) the extensive provincial acquisition program needed to carry it out, and (3) the proposed replacement of private development agencies by the Commission for the development of the community part of the area. However, broad agreement by the Provincial government exists to the concept of a multi-purpose park integrated with a recreation community, although some modification is required to make it acceptable. The four municipalities were more restricted in their view of the role of the provincial park.

Implementation Plan - Stage One, January 1969

Although there was no agreement to the physical, financial or administrative details of the 1967 Plan, the Interdepartmental Study

AOTTAWASAGA

MASTER PLAN

1967

-  RESIDENTIAL
-  ACCOMMODATION
-  COMMERCIAL
-  PARK
-  PARKING

WASAGA PARK COMMUNITY

1:10,000 Feet
1" = 10,000 Feet

January 1971

Committee, representing provincial and municipal interests, did agree that certain initial steps were necessary, no matter what subsequent plans were agreed upon. These comprised certain specific works and certain studies i.e., (i) 4000/5000 off-beach parking spaces (ii) certain road improvements, (iii) a second river bridge at 17th Street, (iv) piped public water and sanitary sewer services in the densely developed area and adjoining land to the south, (v) study of the existing commercial area, and (vi) a study into the possibility of relocating the zoo.

The Cabinet and Ontario Parks Integration Board neither accepted nor rejected any or all of the steps. They did, however, accept the climate of agreement which was achieved as the basis for a planning program.

2. THE PROJECT AND ITS OBJECTIVES

The Park Community Development Program, September 1969

In 1969, the Department of Municipal Affairs with the support of the Departments of Lands and Forests, Highways, Tourism and Information and the Ontario Water Resources Commission, approached the Treasury Board for funding for a development program. Accordingly, in September a three-year Development Program was announced by the Prime Minister's office for the Wasaga Beach area. It was to have a budget for planning and feasibility studies and for urgent highway and car parking

improvements. The principal objective of the Program was to prepare an official plan for the area in cooperation with the local municipalities. Particular emphasis was given to the need for their willing participation throughout. Because close municipal and departmental cooperation was required the administration, planning and coordination of the development Program was placed under the Department of Municipal Affairs. The Program is conducted through the Department's Wasaga Park-Community Project.

The first phase of the Program includes (a) a master plan to indicate broad development strategy, (b) feasibility, preliminary design and cost studies for roads, bridges and services, (c) improvements to traffic circulation, (d) limiting the use of the beach to pedestrians. The second phase would establish the cost share of these services to the provincial and local interests respectively.

The scope and depth of coverage of the Program, and the extent to which it should coordinate the activities of other departments and agencies, was not detailed but suggestions are made later in this report.

The Project's Objectives

The objectives may be achieved directly by the Project, by consultants hired by the Project, or through or by departments of government, local municipalities and boards and private agencies.

Ten separate objectives are identified here and are discussed briefly.

(1) To define the area concerned.

The area of concern is similar to the Target Area of the 1967 Plan and includes beach, river, sand plain, dunes and flood plain in four municipalities. It has some nine miles of beach and comprises about 20 square miles in area.

Consideration will be given also to a small enlargement of the area by the inclusion of additional land to the west so as to include the whole of a Beach Community which is defined in the draft Nottawasaga Official Plan.

Also limited regard is given to areas beyond the defined area so that the Master Plan is related to the needs and potential of a wider area.

(2) To identify the development goals and implementing agencies.

The prime goal is the same as that of the 1967 Plan-the development of a major recreation area for day visitors, tourists, and seasonal and permanent residents, whose respective needs must be kept in balance.

The community and commercial facilities will be provided primarily by private agencies. Development by the Provincial Government will be limited to the provision of the major park and assistance in the provision of certain highways and utilities, with the

possible addition of other limited schemes where necessary to achieve the prime goals (e.g., a redevelopment scheme for the commercial centre).

(3) To prepare a Master Plan.

Such a Plan must reconcile different development concepts and set forth, in broad terms, areas for principal uses and associated development policies, indicating the appropriate staging, implementing agencies, etcetera. Many detailed aspects of the concept cannot be determined at the present time; accordingly, the Master Plan will be directed to the mid 1980's leaving these aspects open for future decisions.

(4) To coordinate the goals of related plans, provincial and local.

This is achieved through the Master Plan whose objectives include and harmonize the goals of the related plans.

Related provincial plans are mainly those for the park, highways and piped services, and form part of the program of the appropriate provincial department.

Related local plans include municipal official and zoning by-laws by which municipal and private activities are regulated.

(5) To coordinate the stages of development of the related plans.

An example of this is the relationship between a local plan for the community and a provincial plan for piped services. Other matters may

require the coordination of the plans of several agencies, e.g. the parks program could involve the Department of Lands and Forests, the Conservation Authority and the municipality.

- (6) To indicate the extent of the relationship between the Project's program and the programs of related agencies.
-

The Project was set up to work with and between the various government, municipal and other agencies and is not seen as superceding the functions of these agencies. (It may be that in the future, administrative reorganization would result in a reallocation of some of these functions, but that is a matter for future decision).

The individual plans and programs of all provincial and local agencies in this area which relate to the prime goal, must be coordinated through Project's Master Plan and Program. This means that the goals of each agency must be included in and if necessary, be modified to conform to the Project's Master Plan and Program. The extent of the coordinated features of the various programs would have to be carefully described in each case to avoid needless duplication of authority, while ensuring a complete integration of activity both at the outset and continually thereafter.

- (7) To direct the preparation of other detailed plans and studies.
-

There will be problems identified by the Project that will require provincial, municipal

or private action. These could include special renewal areas, a zoo relocation study, and other matters of concern which may be identified in the future.

- (8) To ascertain the cost of shared-use facilities and the share to be borne by various provincial agencies and the municipalities.

It is first necessary to agree on a master development plan in sufficient detail and certainty to act as a basis for preliminary design and cost studies for each facility.

- (9) To ascertain the need for administrative changes to carry out the Program.

This may result in changes in the area and functions of the four municipalities to achieve and maintain the level of services required and could also involve some aspects of the local functions of government departments concerned.

- (10) To indicate the role of the Project after the initial planning phases.

A continuous monitoring and reassessment program may be necessary after the previous steps have been completed to ensure that the objectives are up-dated and that their implementation in the various coordinated programs is maintained.

3. WORK OF THE PROJECT TO THE PRESENT TIME

Proceeding from Objectives 1 and 2 (the extent of the defined area and the prime development goal concept from the 1967 Plan), the work of the Project has ranged over Objectives 3 to 7, with priority given to No. 3, a Master Plan.

The method of approach, through survey and consultation, seeks to establish the following:

- the objectives and implementing methods of the 1967 Plan within the context of the events surrounding it;
- the change of events since that time, including a detailed summary of the current (1970) situation;
- current operations, problems and plans of all agencies concerned in the area.

From the foregoing, an assessment of future possibilities can be made, likely to be agreeable to all concerned and having regard to the probable future physical, financial and administrative conditions. Applied to the 1967 Plan concept, this is now expressed as a draft master development plan, which forms a basis for discussion and, hopefully, early agreement by all concerned.

Further detailed stages of the Program will follow this agreement.

The following is a brief description of the principal surveys.

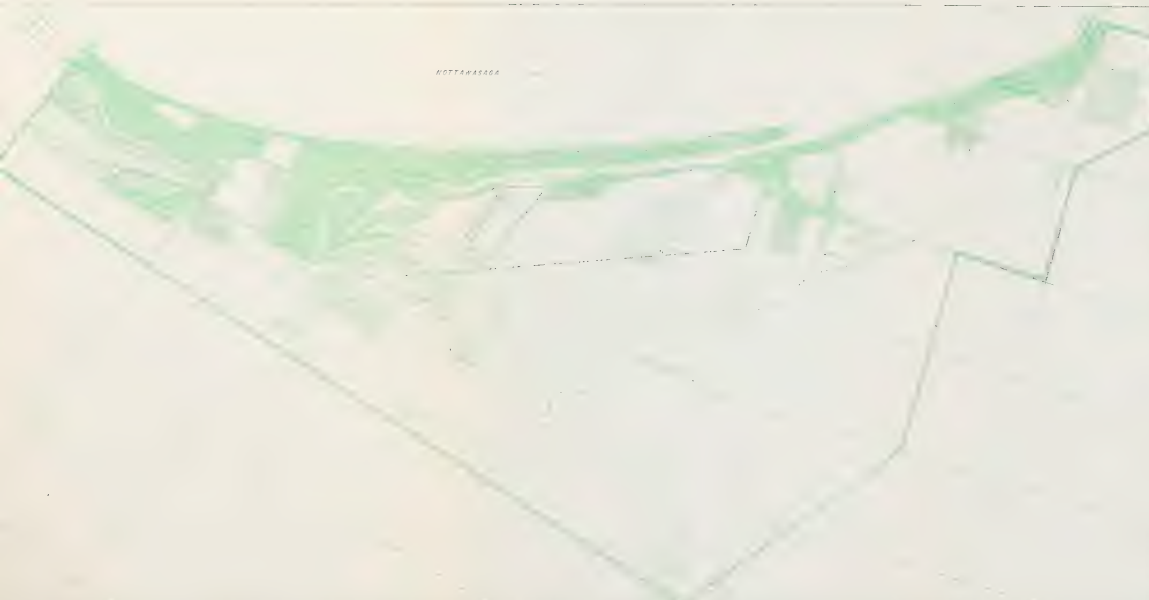
- (1) Existing land use includes all major land uses in the developed part of the area, with summary of changes in recent years.

Nearly 100 new dwellings per year are being built, bringing the total stock to some 3,500. About 750 are occupied as year-round residences, the remainder as cottages. The present resident population of over 2,000 is increasing at 150 per annum.

The estimated seasonal population has remained fairly steady at some 10,000 persons in recent years, because increases from new buildings have been off-set by the demolition of beach-front buildings and by conversions to year-round residences.

New commercial premises are being established mainly in highway strip locations. As for tourist accommodations, about 90 units are being lost annually (mainly poorer types in beach-front locations) and 30 units annually are being built or improved (mainly year-round motels in highway strip locations). The present total of some 2,000 units can accommodate 6,000 persons.

- (2) Subdivided lands are recorded by the extent and location of the related Plan. In 60 years of growth to 1965, about 5,600 lots were registered in areas near the lakeshore or river and most of them were developed. Since 1965 a further 2,000 lots have been created, not on registered plans, on lands further inland, but few of them have been developed. There are currently applications to the Minister of Municipal Affairs for subdivision approval for a further 700 lots. Furthermore, it is understood that applications for approval of several hundred more lots are contemplated by developers.
- (3) A Home and Cottage Survey polled a small sample of the owners and occupants to record their manner of use and their future intentions. Some 30% of cottages sampled were occasionally used in winter. Occupants of 15% of these expressed an intention to use them as year-round residences in the future. Currently about half of all new permanent residences are being created from converted cottages.
- (4) The Beach Use Survey polled a sample of all beach users to determine their home towns, mode and route of travel, activity preferences, etcetera, at various parts of the beach on a typical weekday (Wednesday) and weekend (Sunday).



**BUILT-UP AREAS
AND
SUBDIVIDED LANDS
1970**

- BOUNDARY OF DEFINED AREA
- BUILT-UP AREAS,
SUBDIVIDED LANDS,
REGISTERED PLANS
- SUBDIVIDED LANDS,
REFERENCE PLANS (e.g. 655)
- SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS

WASAGA PARK COMMUNITY

The results can be examined with the traffic and parking surveys which were also conducted and partly related to previous years.

On Wednesday approximately a third of sampled beach users were day visitors, whereas on Sunday, when there were nearly twice as many beach users, approximately two-thirds were day visitors. The other beach visitors were residents, cottagers or tourists who were staying locally.

The use of the beach by cars appears to have levelled off in recent years. This coincided with the diminished sand area resulting from the rising lake level, but it is not known if this is the only reason. Other factors, such as the lack of car parking off the beach or changing tastes in recreation activities, may have a significant bearing.

The peak car parking demand during 1970 was for about 2,500 spaces but the average midweek demand was for some 750 spaces. The peak demand on summer weekends is further illustrated by the estimate that 1,500 or more spaces were required for only 10 days during the season.

(The Beach Use Survey was carried out with substantial assistance from various sections of the Department of Lands and Forests.)

The principal consultations have been with:

- (1) Department of Lands and Forests to establish the background and intent of the 1963 and 1967 Plans and details of progress in purchase and development for parks purposes. At present the Department is proceeding with the purchase and development of land in accordance with its 1963 Plan, as authorized by the Ontario Parks Integration Board in 1965. The principal matter remaining to be determined is how much of that program should be carried out and how much land elsewhere in this area should be purchased and developed for park purposes in the period of the Master Plan. The Project has provided financial assistance to the Department's car park construction program.
- (2) Department of Highways is assisting in the preparation of schemes for priority intersection and road widening. Further assistance in evaluating highway proposals and preparing preliminary design details must await agreement of a draft Master Plan.
- (3) Department of Tourism and Information has provided information on tourism in the area, including details of tourist accommodations licensed by them. The Department emphasizes that all recreational facilities in the region are important to the development of the Wasaga Area as a tourist resort. This includes the growing winter sport activities in the nearby Niagara Escarpment area.

Huronian Historical Parks Branch has been consulted about "Nancy Island", which contains the newly opened "Museum of the Upper Lakes". The Branch sees in the Plan an opportunity to improve the visual setting of "Nancy Island" and to improve its accessibility within the park system, possibly with the aid of a ferry or a footbridge link to the south bank of the river.

- (4) Ontario Water Resources Commission is assisting through advice and has commissioned a study on behalf of the Project into the suitability of the soil to handle development of individual sewage disposal systems and associated drainage matters. Further assistance and studies will be made to locate sources for a central water supply and a site for a sewage disposal works, and for the design of the water supply and sewage disposal systems. The Commission has appointed a local engineering firm, Ainley and Associates, to act for it and the Project locally in these matters. All of these studies are being financed through the Project's budget.
- (5) Simcoe County Health Unit and Department of Health have jointly advised on the need to carry out the soil, etc. study mentioned above. The Health Unit has prevented new buildings in several developing areas because of wet ground conditions, pending a detailed report of the above study.

- (6) Department of Treasury and Economics
(Regional Development Branch) and the Georgian
Bay Regional Development Council

were consulted concerning the role of the area in the region, having regard to proposals for the Toronto-Centred Region and the forthcoming report on the Georgian Bay Region. The 1967 Plan concept for a Master Plan still appears valid.

- (7) Department of Energy and Resources Management
(Conservation Authorities Branch)

has been consulted to determine the principal conservation features of the area, whether for environmental hazard or uniqueness. That Branch is compiling a report which will be concerned mainly with the Nottawasaga River and the sand dunes.

- (8) The Village of Wasaga Beach has arranged contact through its Planning Board and consultation has taken the form of detailed discussion on all aspects of planning related to this area including 1967 Plan concept. A wide measure of agreement has been achieved.

- (9) The Council of the Township of Flos has been consulted on various occasions. A broad measure of agreement is emerging towards a balanced development of commercial, recreational and residential uses in the area. Present discussions concern the way this development can best be achieved.

- (10) With the Township of Sunnidale consultations have taken place at joint meetings of the Planning Board and Council

Discussions are turning on the appropriate development of the Township's natural assets - the dunes and the river - and the extent to which commercial-recreational uses and pockets of residential uses, can be accommodated.

- (11) There have been a few meetings with the Township of Nottawasaga Council and Planning Board and the planning consultants. An Official Plan for the whole Township is in final stages of preparation and appears likely to reflect the 1967 Plan's aims.
- (12) The views of the Wasaga Beach Chamber of Commerce were sought on the present and future, through a questionnaire form, but response was minimal. Since then, many personal contacts have been made with local business operators and their views discussed at length. An overriding impression is that their present lack of confidence in the future will be overcome with the adoption of a Plan.
- (13) On behalf of the Ontario Zoological Park, situated just south of the rivermouth, a clear request was made for its substantial expansion on adjacent land, as indicated in the 1967 Plan. This area seemed inherently more suitable than any other which the Society could envisage in the area.

4. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

These are the principal features of the work mentioned in the foregoing part of this report that are relevant to the proposed Master Plan and the subsequent program.

Beach Park

- (1) There is an urgent need to remove cars from the well-used parts of the beach to make them more attractive.
- (2) There is an evident attraction to driving for pleasure along the lakeshore, especially in the early evening.
- (3) Although considerable improvements to the beach park facilities have been made by the Department of Lands and Forests, further improvements, particularly car parking, have been hampered because the purchase of property is restricted to voluntary transactions.

A considerable number of properties have been purchased and the buildings removed, yet the sites cannot make an effective unit for their proposed use. This also results in a loss of assessment to the municipality and contributes to the adjacent owners lack of confidence in the future.

- (4) Because of the number of properties already owned, a relatively modest provincial acquisition program of the key properties could provide sufficient parking to cater for the current peak demand, although not necessarily in the locations now used by the public.

- (5) Most of the extent of demand for facilities, particularly parking and access, arises on seven or eight weekends only and appears likely to continue that way in the future when actual volumes could be much higher than at present.

Because the required purchase of developed land creates high land cost for extra beach-side parking (which could amount to \$800 per space) other alternatives for peak parking should be considered. If peak car parking space was provided in areas remote from the beach, facilities such as transportation, shelters, and a wider range of recreation attractions might become necessary.

- (6) It is acknowledged that the separation of the peak period car parks from the beach front may not be wholly acceptable to members of the public, particularly as an innovation in the early stages. The park's development program, therefore should be capable of adaptation to accommodate peak parking conditions by various methods.
- (7) There is a degree of uncertainty about the budget which may be available for park purchase and development and the rate at which this would be forthcoming. Thus, any park development program should contain a number of relatively self-contained areas whose priority of development recognizes the total park-community objectives.

Other Open Space Areas

- (8) Certain areas of land not required for the beach use, but necessary for the wider park concept (being adjacent to the river, south of the river, and at the inland dunes area) are under pressure for residential development. If this development occurs or even if the land is subdivided and sold for later development, the land would be impossible to recover for park purposes. Urgent action is necessary to prevent this from occurring.
- (9) If the purchase of land for ultimate open space purposes takes place, all of it may not ultimately be used for a provincial park. It could, for example, be made available to a private recreational organization such as a golf club or for associated commercial development on a limited scale.
- It may be necessary to authorize a special purchasing agency to supplement the related functions of Lands and Forests, the Conservation Authority and the municipalities.
- (10) The beach in the Township of Flos is operated by the Township and is well used by the cars of day tourists on weekends. Some unsatisfactory public toilets were removed this year at the request of the Medical Officer of Health. This beach will probably become a provincial responsibility in due course. Meanwhile, some toilets will

be necessary for 1971. From discussions with the Township Council it is clear that they consider this a provincial responsibility.

Commercial

- (11) New commercial premises are locating in three areas, mainly strip highway oriented. Further growth needs to be contained to avoid the disadvantages of excessive strip development.
- (12) The relatively slow growth of new tourist accommodation units is due to the need for higher standards for any such new development. However, the commercial potential is linked with the local recreation facilities which have a limited range and a short summer season. Accordingly, the range of recreation attractions, particularly those related to other seasons, ought to be increased.
- (13) The viability of the Main Street commercial area is partly dependent on the car parking provided on the beach nearby. Removal of cars from this crowded beach section ought to be accompanied by the provision of at least as many new spaces in a correspondingly convenient position.

Community

- (14) The Minister of Municipal Affairs has not approved plans of subdivisions for several years pending the adoption of a plan. This

appears to contribute to the disregard of the normal planning processes by developers up to June 1970 and the use of methods other than registered plans for the subdivision of land.

- (15) Past residential subdivisions provided cheap, unserviced lots; areas now being so developed are posing serious drainage and pollution problems because of their size and the wet ground conditions. The municipalities are now aware of the need for careful guidance in the layout or standard of development and are looking for constructive advice and assistance.
- (16) At the moment, there is effective control of land use and development in only part of the area. Sunnidale has recently passed a zoning by-law to control development. Development in Nottawasaga is controlled by a zoning order made recently by the Minister of Municipal Affairs. There is no zoning control in the developing parts of Flos or Wasaga Beach.
- (17) Some of the areas singled for development recently are those which have also a high recreational value. For example, some of the river oxbow area which the 1967 Plan earmarked for recreation and camping has been developed with residential lots. Thus, the next year or two will be critical if

these and other areas of recreational value are to be preserved from development.

- (18) From the preliminary results of the soils and drainage study, many of the inland areas which are otherwise suitable, have a high water table and extensive drainage work is needed before they can be developed. In addition, substantial new development will probably require public water and sewer services for satisfactory development.

General

- (19) A working plan for future development of the area is an early necessity to guide sound community growth and to prevent the further loss of environmental qualities and recreational potential. The extent and rate of provincial acquisition for open space purposes is an essential part of that plan.
- (20) The uncertainty of the ultimate roles that would be played by the park and the community elements respectively tends to make any detailed ultimate plan misleading. On this basis, the Project's Master Plan is addressed primarily to a period 12-15 years hence.
- (21) The draft Master Plan was prepared as a practical expression of the park-community concept in the light of the surveys and

consultations summarized in this report. Its proposals should next be submitted and discussed at the local level. During the discussions, amendments may result from consultation with all concerned, and during this period parts of the Plan can be agreed in greater detail.

- (22) Following this it is anticipated that a more detailed version would be agreed upon (although there may be details on which no agreement has been reached). This would enable the commissioning of preliminary design studies for highways and piped services and further detailed planning studies.

MASTER PLAN 1971

5. SCOPE OF THE MASTER PLAN 1971

The Master Plan sets the broad outline of all future development indicated on the accompanying map by all agencies concerned. Those principally concerned are the Department of Municipal Affairs which has a general responsibility to oversee the activities of all municipalities and more specifically to administer the Planning Act and the Municipal Act; the local municipalities representing the citizens; the private developers; the Conservation Authority; the Department of Lands and Forests; the Department of Highways; and the Ontario Water Resources Commission.

The two essential functions of the Master Plan are

- to define development goals for the area;
- to guide and coordinate the programs of the approval and development agencies.

The Master Plan 1971 describes the development of this area in four stages, i.e. (i) ultimate plan, (ii) for the mid-1980's in 12-15 years from the present, (iii) for the mid-1970's, in 4-5 years from the present, (iv) in the immediate future.

6. THE ULTIMATE PLAN

The Master Plan 1971 accepts

- (1) the goal of a year-round recreational area within a developing region as described in the recent proposed policy document Design for Development: The Toronto-Centred Region.
- (2) the development of a large multi-use park, integrated with a viable community of residents (mainly seasonal) as described in the Wasaga Beach Master Plan 1967.

The park, located mainly in areas requiring environmental protection and areas of prime recreational potential, is proposed to conserve the natural assets of the area and to provide a wide range of recreational activities for day visitors, tourists and residents. The park recreation areas would be designed so that the public could move easily from one area to another, having ready choice of more than one activity during a single visit.

The key role of the park is emphasized. By conserving and improving the natural and recreational assets of the area, it provides the basic "capital" for the continued growth of all kinds of recreational development. Some areas of, and uses in, the park could be provided by private investment.

- (3) the development of a residential community of seasonal and permanent residents provided with a good standard of necessary community services, set within the park areas.
- (4) the provision of commercial facilities, including recreational and tourist accommodations, in several distinct areas to serve the needs of the residents, tourists and day visitors from a wider area.
- (5) the provision of a level of community and utility services adequate for the needs of a substantial urban recreation area.
- (6) the provision of a system of main roads to provide ready access to this and the surrounding area for residents and visitors from the region.

7. THE PLAN FOR THE MID- 1980's

(1) General

The extent of the ultimate effective demand for the park, community, and commercial elements cannot be determined in detail. Similarly, preferences in recreational activities, entertainment and seasonal residence may change in a way which cannot be forecast accurately at the present time.

Consequently, the main detailed stage of the Master Plan will be addressed to a period 12-15 years from now when forecasting can still be a reasonable approximation and when the amount of likely development can make significant progress towards the achievement of the goals of the ultimate plan. As far as possible, development to the mid-1980's will be planned to leave the maximum choice of direction for further development after that time.

The attached map illustrates the mid-1980's development and shows proposals as follows:

- the pattern of park and community development which is likely to occur by the mid-1980's
- alternative possibilities of development which require determination
- where development is undetermined

(2) Park Areas

The term "Park" is used to include any areas used principally for conservation or for open air recreation. These areas may be owned and operated by any provincial or municipal agency, or by private interests. It is anticipated that substantial areas will have to be owned by the provincial government.

The uses could range from extensive to intensive ones, including those for the conservation of natural features or wild-life, agriculture and forestry, the enjoyment of natural scenery, fishing and boating, zoological park, camp grounds and picnic areas, golf courses, golf driving ranges, swimming pools, sports and entertainment stadiums, race tracks, arenas, circuses, amusement parks; also limited commercial activities to serve them, such as restaurants, accommodations, etc. The location and details of each use would be carefully considered within the overall park-community layout and in order to conserve the natural environment.

Beach Park

To develop the beach park, land in addition to the beach is required, but not to the same extent along all parts of the beach. This would result in beach areas having a range of levels of accessibility and use: (a) in some areas no additional land is suggested, (b) in others sufficient additional land for sheltered grass areas adjoining the beach only, (c) in others as in (b) and with additional land for car parks, and, (d) in a few places a greater depth of land associated with a wider variety of facilities. Nearly 10,000 car parking spaces can be provided in all.

Proportionate to the beach length, the number of users that an area as in (d) above could attract and accommodate would be much greater than in area (a). Accordingly, areas as in (d) would be equipped to handle additional large crowds of day visitors on peak summer weekends with extra sanitary and change facilities, shelters and adjacent commercial facilities. The wide range of recreation activities and peak period car park and picnic facilities would be located in these areas because of their main road access, river frontage and links to the rear parkland. Where parking areas are beyond a reasonable walk from the beach and other principal recreational attractions, connections would be improved with additional footbridges and a shuttle bus service.

Five areas described in (d) are suggested:

(listed from west to east)

- (i) each side of the extension of the Townline Road (using two extensive undeveloped areas);
- (ii) near Joan Avenue, linking the beach with both sides of the river;
- (iii) west of the main commercial area, linked by a footbridge over the river at Nancy Island;
- (iv) east of the main commercial area, near the rivermouth linked by a footbridge over the river;
- (v) west of John Street.

Both (iv) and (v) are linked with the existing Zoo location.

Inland Park

The inland park is based mainly on the inland sand dune area and partly on the river, where there are many areas subject to hazards for development (steep slopes, flood land, etc.) but which have limited recreational potential. The park would include adjacent areas of land to provide more areas for recreational facilities.

Park Links

These are park areas which link the beach park with the inland park areas. These links would serve as breaks between various areas of community development and be based on natural features, such as water courses, wherever possible. They would provide trails for walking and riding direct from the community development to the whole park system.

In addition, near the beach, some would contain car parking and picnic areas to cater for the peak crowds of day visitors. Back from the beach some would contain intensive recreation uses which are not appropriate elsewhere such as amusement parks, race tracks, sports and entertainment stadiums, swimming pools, school grounds, riding stables, camp grounds, as well as possible future new recreational activities.

(3) Commercial Areas

The major commercial area is an enlargement of the existing Main Street area south of the river, because only limited land is available on the spit. This area would contain recreationally oriented retail and service trades, entertainment, convention and recreation uses. The whole area would form an attractive and vital focus for a wide area around. The river, crossed by a footbridge at Nancy Island, would form one of the main features of the area. The west side would be bounded by a park area, which would also contain extensive car parking areas serving the commercial as well as the park areas. Its successful development would have to be carefully guided, to ensure that earlier stages did not prevent the successful development of the whole area.

The other principal commercial areas would serve residents, and beach park and highway users in the retail and service trades. In addition small groups of highway commercial users may be located in selected main road locations, excluding the expressway, and small groups of retail and service stores may be located in commercial and residential areas to better serve the community and park users.

(4) Tourist Accommodation

Areas sufficient to accommodate a little more than double the existing provision have been allocated in several locations.

The principal areas are adjacent to the main commercial area, south of the river. The natural interdependence of the main commercial and accommodation areas requires their close juxtaposition and a mixing of uses where they join. Thus, parts of the commercial development would contain tourist accommodations and in some tourist accommodation areas hotels, etc. would have entertainment and restaurant areas.

The other accommodation areas are located in relation to the principal road system and the recreational facilities. These would contain purely accessory commercial features.

In a few other areas the establishment or enlargement of accommodation facilities would be permitted but only where they would not intrude into the use of the adjacent area or reduce the viability of the allocated areas.

(5) Residential

Residential development will be for seasonal and permanent residents. The latter would

include those employed in the area, retired from work and, to a limited extent, employed elsewhere.

Sufficient land is allocated for some 12-15 years growth at about twice the current rate with the addition of a further supply of land awaiting development. The land should be released on the market at a rate that gives developers and owners adequate opportunity to buy and develop well ahead of their actual need, but not so far ahead as to create either

- (i) heavy investment in development and servicing years before it can be properly used

or

- (ii) large number of separated but undeveloped lots (being held usually primarily for speculative purposes) and thus jeopardizing the provision of an adequate level of lot services in due time. Such holdings also jeopardize the prospect of reallocating the layout to one more in tune with future needs.

Each residential unit would be set within the total park area and open space and trail links would penetrate the residential area providing ready access to the entire park system. The residential development should be grouped so as to facilitate the provision of an adequate system of community and utility services.

In areas where a high level of service is provided, seasonal and permanent residences would mix. In other areas, before this level is achieved, residences would be limited to seasonal occupation only.

The residential areas would contain a range of dwelling types and densities depending on location and the level of piped services provided. These would range from detached houses on very large lots on individual services to garden court apartments at medium density on full piped services.

Details concerning the types of areas suitable for varying kinds of residential development must await the results of the soils etc. study. Generally, areas nearer the congested parts of the spit area (which will require piped services) should be provided with these services as a matter of priority.

The general design theme of recreational living should prevail in the area. As many of the trees as possible should be retained, both on the lots and on the street allowances.

(6) Water Supply, Ground Drainage and Sewage Disposal

A public main water supply is required with a central supply and distributory system to serve all potential development areas and all existing developed areas. New development should be so provided from the outset.

Ground drainage is required in most areas by a system of ditches, drains and channels to render the land suitable for development.

The method of sanitary sewage disposal will depend on the suitability of the ground for individual septic tank systems and the amount and density of development proposed. A few areas proposed for scattered, low density development may possibly be suitable for development on the basis of individual disposal systems. Most new development should be based on the provision of sanitary sewers from the outset. Where sewers are needed, but impractical for the immediate future, some low-density development might be possible on septic tanks as an interim measure, providing that the area could safely support such a system.

(7) Main Highways

The map indicates a system of suggested principal roads by the mid-1980's. The completion of the expressway linking Highway 400 with Collingwood and the west is not expected for many years. Accordingly, the amount of development, particularly the day visitor car parking, should be maintained within the capacity of the other roads.

The main roads from the south are directed to the principal day use car parks near the beach to minimize the need for heavy east-west traffic flows.

The development of River Road West and a new river bridge as a link between Highway 92 and Mosley Street will provide a principal east-west route to minimize the amount of traffic travelling east-west on the spit.

The construction of a second new bridge in the vicinity of Joan Avenue will encourage direct access to that part of the beach from the south.







On the spit, only two areas require substantial road improvements.

- (a) West of Joan Avenue, a section of Dunkerron Avenue as far as Bay Street would be developed to handle the beach traffic in that part.

- (b) In the main commercial area, the road adjoining the beach, that now extends from Spruce Street as far west as 2nd Street, should be extended to 11th Street to provide in part a loop to serve the car parks in that area and to serve as a scenic drive near the beach and along the top of the first inland dune.

The section of River Road east of Highway 92 would be replaced as a through route by Zoo Park Road, avoiding the need for through traffic in this developing area.

**DRAFT
MASTER PLAN
1971
DEVELOPMENT BY
MID-1980'S**

- EXPRESSWAY
- NEW LINK ROADS
- MAIN ROADS
- - - MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY
-  COMMERCIAL
-  TOURIST ACCOMMODATION
-  RESIDENTIAL
-  PARK/BEACH CAR PARKS
-  NO DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS
-  ALTERNATE POSSIBILITIES

WASAGA PARK COMMUNITY

0 100 200 300 400 500 Feet
1:12,500

8. PRIORITIES FOR THE MID-1970's

This period includes the first stage of major road, water, sewer and park development. Details are dependent upon the acceptance of this Master Plan and the successful completion of detailed studies. The principal matters of concern for this period are

- (1) substantial improvement of certain concentrated areas of beach park, with the added provision of peak parking areas;
- (2) purchase and part development of some park links and rear park areas;
- (3) expansion of Ontario Zoological Park on its permanent site;
- (4) some commercial and tourist accommodation development, including the area south of the river, as part of a carefully planned main centre;
- (5) residential development in areas where sewers are not needed at the outset and elsewhere, where sewers must first be provided.

IMPLEMENTATION

9. PRIORITIES FOR 1971

Planning

- (1) Approval of a Master Plan as a basis to proceed to further detail.
- (2) Obtaining control over land development by restricted area ("zoning") by-laws.
- (3) Commissioning preliminary design and cost studies for the provision and/or improvement of main highways, water supply, drainage and sewage disposal facilities, based on the Master Plan.
- (4) Preparation of Official Plans by the municipalities, including the consideration of a joint plan.
- (5) Study of the effects of river flooding and erosion on development possibilities on, and adjacent to the river.
- (6) Agreement to share costs of main services, (as in (3) above) between various agencies.

Park

- (7) Further improvements to beach park, including more pedestrian-only beach sections.

- (8) Provision of toilets on the beach in Flos Township.
- (9) Purchase of land, if necessary, to safeguard the aims for park etc. development.
- (10) Study for best location for expansion of Ontario Zoological Park.
- (11) Study to consider future trends in recreation and ways to cater for them in the area, including capability and limitations of park development in areas of environmental hazard.

Community

- (12) Interpretation of soils etc., study to identify the areas and conditions for varying levels of piped services.
- (13) Identify where development may be approved immediately based on (1) and (12) above.
- (14) Ground water pollution study in the existing developed areas.
- (15) Study to prepare a comprehensive plan and stages for the growth of the main commercial area.

Highways

- (16) Improvement of traffic circulation in the Main Street area and experimental closing of Main Street to cars.
- (17) Improvement to the Byrnes/Mosley/Townline intersection.





3 1761 11547451 2